The Builder.

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IN preceding volumes of our journal we have spoken at some length on the subject of architects' charges, with the view of removing some of the doubts felt on the question, and of inducing consistency, if not uniformity of practice, in this respect.* We invited members of the profession to favour us in confidence with a memorandum of their customary charges, and any remarks that might occur to them, hoping thereby to settle some questions conclusively; and we looked forward to a report on the same subject from a committee appointed by the Institute of Architects to inquire into various points of professional practice. Our hope of a useful result was disappointed in both cases: all who wrote to us were inquirers, not communicants; and the committee of the Institute, who seem to have found the same difficulty in obtaining knowledge of the practice of any number of architects, did in reality very little, and thought it better not to publish the result of their inquiries or any opinions on the matter. It was stated in the annual report,—that "they found the most perfect unanimity to prevail amongst the members on all the more important questions connected with the practice of the profession; on the liabilities and responsibilities of architects; and as to the usual and accustomed remuneration for their services under different conditions. The information thus obtained, and embodied in the minutes of the committee, and available for the use of the members in general, will, it is presumed, be peculiarly valuable on occasions when questions may be submitted to the council for their consideration and advice, as they will now be enabled to deliver opinions with the weight and authority of the profession in general, as represented by the Institute, instead of, as heretofore, merely expressing the opinion of individual members."

We took occasion to complain of this proceeding, and urged that, as it was equally important that the public should be informed on these points as that architects should know what others charged, the council should publish a well-considered report on the subject, and not shrink from asserting their own position and claims.†

They have not done so, and the question remains in the same unsettled position as ever. Whether or not the council do receive inquiries as to what charges should be made, to which they give answers having the weight and authority of the profession in general, we cannot say; but certainly we still constantly have queries forwarded to us with lamentations over the fact that they are charging in the dark, and, what is worse, that, charge what they may, their employers always seem to think they have the right to object and quibble.

A few weeks ago we inserted one inquiry which is often made to us, in these words:—"In the case of a building not erected by contract, but where, in addition to his customary duties, the architect will have to measure and value the works on their completion, is he entitled to any and what compensation in addition to the ordinary charge of 5 per cent.?"

A difference of opinion exists respecting this. Mr. Joseph Bonomi, who printed his terms in 1794, charged 5 per cent. commission upon the whole expense of the building, labour, and materials, at London prices; for which, to use his own words,—"B. makes the design, furnishes all the necessary working drawings, and four fair drawings, two plans, one front, and one section; makes the necessary estimate, and attends the execution of the work. If a clerk of the works is required (as he should be), he is to be paid by the employer. All the journeys to and from to be paid at the rate of 18d. per mile. If the expense of the building exceeds the estimate given, then B. demands no more than the commission upon the amount of the given estimate, provided, though, that the overplus is not caused by additions and alterations in the design. If it should be desired, after the building is completed, to have it measured and valued, the *expenses attending such measurement and valuation are to be paid by the employer.*"

In the evidence appended to the report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed in 1828, to inquire into the working of the office of Woods (one of the few documents which can be quoted on the subject), Sir Jeffrey Wyatville states, that in his extensive practice he always received 5 per cent. commission on the expenditure, and *the expense of measuring besides*: he also charged for his journeys. Mr. Henry Harrison, however, on the contrary, said that 5 per cent. was the usual commission, *including* the measuring and making out the several accounts; and the Surveyor-General, in a report dated 1826, stated that Messrs. Soane, Smirke, Cockerell, and others had not in their practice made any charge for measuring the works they have been employed upon, considering this expense to be included in their commission of 5 per cent. Mr. Nash, at Buckingham Palace, received 5 per cent., the Board of Works undertaking the measuring and making out.

What is wanted, however, is the practice of to-day, not of 1826; and this we are disposed to think would be found not uniform. The Committee of the Institute, if we are rightly informed, considered that no extra charge should be made for measuring, if the works were not under contract: that the 5 per cent. should include the design, the specification, general estimate, working drawings, superintendence of the works, and the adjustment of the accounts.

In large works this would prove sufficiently remunerative, but in small works it certainly would not: an additional 1½ per cent. at least should be charged for making out the accounts.

For measuring and making out extras and omissions from a contract, no extra charge should be made beyond the commission of 5 per cent. on their amount; but this commission may fairly be charged on the amount of *both*,—provided (to reverse Bonomi's words), the overplus is not caused by the forgetfulness, inattention, or ignorance of the architect.

We are not strongly wedded to the system of payment by commission, but see no better mode of managing it. Apart from the ground it gives for unjustly charging architects with a desire to swell the expenditure as much as possible, there is this real objection to the mode, that an individual's ability or standing in the profession goes for nothing. As we remarked some years ago,—"Mr. Brown, Jones, (no Inigo perhaps), or Robinson, who makes drawings and superintends the erection of a huge warehouse, costing 10,000*l.* or 15,000*l.*, and Mr. William, of Wykeham, who designs and carries out a gem of a chapel, with an expenditure of a tenth of that sum, are paid very differently by this system; the latter might require scores of drawings where the former needed one, saying nothing of the higher order of mind exhibited, while the remuneration would, of course, be but a tenth part." Not that a true artist—one who loves his profession—would ever think of this, or hesitate a moment between two such works if the choice were offered to him; still this is the pounds-shillings-and-pence state of the case, and does not seem to be wholly correct.

In reply to some other inquiries, we would say that the commission on works by contract "where there is a ruinous difference in amount between the highest and lowest" may be fairly charged on the mean of the whole, and that the value of old materials applied in the new works (the lead for example on a church roof contracted to be restored) should be added to the sum on which the commission is charged.

On more than one occasion we have been asked to say to what extent an architect is liable for orders given to builders. We believe we are correct in saying that an architect is in the position of an agent, and that if, in giving his order, *he names his principal*, no personal responsibility is incurred.

Once more we urge the Institute of Architects to go fully into the inquiry, and to publish a clear and comprehensive report on it, for the information of the public and the guidance of the profession.

* See vol. iii., p. 60; vol. iv., pp. 21, 61, &c.
† See vol. iv. p. 323.

## ON GRECIAN ARCHITECTURE.*

IN two preceding lectures which I have had the honour to read before the College, we traced the rise and progress of architecture from the earliest periods of the world, through the patriarchal ages, discoursing of all that could be found to illustrate the subject in sacred history. We then came to the consideration, as closely connected with the destiny of the Hebrew nation,—of one of the oldest countries in the world,—of one, which, though changed in its language, its observances, and its religion, yet retains its grand and imposing memorials of architecture: in its pyramids, no longer the tombs of their once mighty builders; in its majestic and solemn temples, no longer frequented by the deluded worshippers of a heifer, or the believers in the divinity of a bird, a fish, or a reptile.

We, indeed, only glanced at the architectural wonders of Egypt in speaking of that ancient country, nor is it intended now to enter into a detail of the style of its temples, highly interesting as the inquiry would prove, beyond the necessity of shewing an intimate connection between the architecture of Egypt and that of Greece, to which the present lecture will be chiefly devoted.

When we find that some of the most celebrated men in Grecian story travelled into Egypt, as Homer, Pythagoras, Lycurgus, Solon, Herodotus, Plato, and many others, that much of Egyptian lore was, therefore, introduced into the legislation, the poetry, and the religion of the Greeks, we must not be surprised to find also that their architecture was in some measure derived from the same source, from that country, in fact, which, in the days of Cecrops as in the age of Moses, had the reputation of being the wisest, the most refined, as well as the most skilful of nations. The great divinity of the Athenians—the virgin-goddess and protectress of their city—was Egyptian; and not only Minerva, but many of

* Read at a meeting of the Freemasons of the Church on the 13th of June, the Rev. G. Pocock, LL.B., in the chair.

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